

724-05: CONCLUSION

This *Drought Management Plan* is the fourth in the series of State Guide Plan elements dealing with water supply. A plan for dealing with periodic episodes of precipitation at below-normal levels is an essential component of the state's organization and procedures for management of its water resources. Current conditions may or may not lead to a drought emergency this year, but one will certainly happen in the future. The plan shows that the state has experienced at least six major droughts since 1929.

The plan sets forth goals, objectives and strategies for drought management as well as policies, which serve as guiding principles for both short and long-term actions. They illustrate the high degree of cooperation among state agencies, local governments, and water suppliers, major water users and the public as a whole that must be achieved if the effects of drought are to be minimized. The plan establishes the mechanism for interagency coordination that will result in effective drought management. Drought levels are defined and drought indices are identified so that all parties will have consistent data and terminology to use in evaluating conditions on a continuing basis. A list of "Response Actions" specifies the actors and actions to be taken at each level from "normal" to "emergency."

The long-term goals, objectives and strategies are comprehensive but not excessively demanding. They continue and strengthen programs that the Water Resources Board and many other agencies, organizations, and individuals have pursued since completion of the *Water Supply Analysis for the State of Rhode Island* in 1990 and adoption of the State Guide Plan Element 722, *Water Supply Plan for Rhode Island*, by the State Planning Council in 1991.

From the public hearing statement of Daniel W. Varin, Chair, Water Resources Board, May 5, 2002.